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## [Park System Continues Growing](#)

When the Family Aquatic Center and Heritage Land Playground both opened in Central Park this spring, Scott Esmond could have been forgiven if he had sat back in his chair and relaxed a bit.

But Broken Arrow's Parks & Recreation Director hasn't even slowed down to really admire how much those latest additions to the 27-acre park in the heart of the community have meant to the quality of life here.

In addition to adding new or improved playground and picnic facilities to existing parks and planning a new swimming pool for Country Aire, Esmond and his staff have been busy fitting together the pieces of a parks puzzle that should really start coming together next summer. Both Jackson Park and Centennial Park should be open to the public by that time. Another new park will be the Buford Tract. Aspen Creek Park was given to the City and is now being maintained and improved by Esmond's crews.

The big news, however, is the purchase of a 109-acre park site located along the east side of Lynn Lane between Omaha and Albany. Named Nienhuis Park, it will be the site for both the Community/Teen Center and the Youth Football Complex, approved in the last bond issue by city voters. A master plan is being developed for that park land, which will dwarf anything

Broken Arrowans have seen.

“The citizens of Broken Arrow have seen many neighborhood parks develop over the past several years, and they’ve made it possible for us to provide some of the finest youth sports facilities that you’ll find anywhere in Oklahoma,” said Esmond. “Our parks have added to the quality of life in Broken Arrow for many years. We’re trying to add to that in other areas of the city over the next few years, and provide parks and facilities for both active and passive use. It’s going to be an exciting time for us to watch all of this develop.”

Jackson Park, located at Washington and Garnett, will include a pond, picnic facilities (including a shelter), playground, extensive landscaping, a walkway, restrooms and paved parking. It was made possible through the donation of land by the Jackson family.

Centennial Park is located at the southwest corner of Broadway and Main and will be the site of a statue commemorating Broken Arrow’s Centennial Celebration, which begins Oct. 16 of 2002 and continues through October of 2003. There will also be a commemorative brick walkway in the park.

Buford Tract is located on Houston, also in the western portion of the city. It provides 34 acres of land.

Nienhuis, also made possible through the generosity of a local family, will begin to take shape after a master plan is developed, with funding already available for the Community/Youth Center and the Youth Football Complex. As work begins on those projects, more of the park will open up to the public over the next couple of years.



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## **Police Department Gains Accreditation**

The Broken Arrow Police Department has become only the sixth law enforcement agency in the state of Oklahoma to earn an Award of Accreditation from the Oklahoma Association of Chiefs of Police. The award was presented to the City Council at its Aug. 20 meeting.

An accreditation team was in Broken Arrow for three days, assessing all areas of the department. The process for accreditation actually began in February of 1998.

There are 191 separate standards (most of those containing multiple parts) which must be met before accreditation is awarded. Those standards are in three categories: administration, personnel and operations. Meeting those standards resulted in many of the BAPD practices being put into the form of written directives, creating manuals.



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## **Alarm Ordinance In Effect**

Beginning Oct. 1 the Broken Arrow Police Department will be responding in a new way to residential and business alarms -- and it’s a system which should save the City a great deal of money and save officers a great deal of frustration, while improving their safety.

The growing number of alarm systems installed in Broken Arrow has created an ever-increasing strain on the Police Department -- particularly when stormy weather (high winds, lightning and ice storms are the main culprits) sets off alarms. A new ordinance will go into effect Oct. 1 which will address that problem.

Statistics show that more than 98 percent of the calls made by police officers to burglar/intrusion alarms wind up being false.

The new ordinance requires that users of burglar/intrusion alarm systems must first acquire a "First Response Permit" from the City before police will make the initial response after the alarm is activated. The permits would cost \$20 and also include information which help police in getting in touch with alarm companies and owners of the homes and businesses.

Those who do not wish to purchase the permits must depend upon a representative from their alarm company or someone at the home or business to notify police that there is evidence of a crime having been committed. This is known as "secondary response" mode.

In the past, police would respond to all alarm calls. If they ascertained that no crime had been committed, a letter would be issued and a report filed.

Police officials estimate that the false alarm calls had cost the City more than \$55,000 during the past year, and more than 100 lost man hours per month. Chief Carolyn Kusler also pointed out that there was a growing concern for officer safety, as too often those responding to alarm calls assumed it would be a false alarm. If an alarm call was indeed an emergency, the officer responding could be in added danger. A similar ordinance in Tulsa reduced the false alarm calls by 38 percent.

The new ordinance was written after hours of studies of what other cities throughout the country have done to deal with the same problem, and after receiving input from citizens in Broken Arrow. The ordinance is designed to cut back on the false alarm runs, without taking punitive action against those with multiple violations.

Part of the licensing process includes a training class on the proper installation and use of alarm systems. Police reports indicate that by far the majority of false alarms are caused by systems which were not properly installed, or which were not operated correctly.



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## Cell Tower Ordinance Studied

Citizens in Broken Arrow have traditionally been given numerous opportunities to participate in their municipal government, and this summer has been no different.

One of the committees created by the City Council this summer has been developing a revised ordinance on construction of cell phone towers in Broken Arrow. Vice-Mayor Tony Petrik has headed the committee after the Council on July 2 voted a 180-day moratorium on any cell tower decisions. Two public meetings have been held to give residents the chance to speak out on cell towers.

Petrik said that the committee will begin rewriting the ordinance in September, with plans calling for a presentation to the Council in October. Those still wishing to be heard on the matter should write to the City Manager's office at P.O. Box 610, Broken Arrow, OK 74013, or e-mail him at MichaelK@city.broken-arrow.ok.us.

Also this summer the Council has created a Youth City Council for Broken Arrow juniors and seniors in high school. Each Council member will select a teen from his ward from applications

turned in by 5 p.m., Sept. 13. Applications may be obtained from high school counselors or from City Hall. Call 259-8277 for more information, or see the City website at [www.city.broken-arrow.ok.us](http://www.city.broken-arrow.ok.us).



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## New Era Opens with NSU, South Loop

When the Broken Arrow Expressway first opened in the mid-1960s and linked what was then a small town of about 10,000 to its metropolitan neighbor to the west, a new era began. About that same time, phone calls from Broken Arrow to Tulsa were converted from toll calls to free.

During the month of August, 2001, two major events ushered in another new era for Broken Arrow and Broken Arrowans of the future. The Broken Arrow campus of Northeastern State University opened Aug. 11, with classes beginning Aug. 20. And the Creek Turnpike South Loop Extension opened its first phase on Aug. 15.

Both of those projects have already had an immense impact on the community. Both will continue to have an impact well into the future.

The NSU-BA campus is located on land owned by the City just east of the Camp Russell facility for Boy Scouts on New Orleans (101st). Voters approved a one-half cent increase in sales taxes to pay for \$16 million of the construction costs of the campus, which is opening on schedule. Sales tax receipts which will pay off those bonds are considerably ahead of projected schedules. At this time there is little secondary development around the NSU-BA site. But that is expected to change with the completion of the South Loop through that part of the city.

The impact of the southern portion of the turnpike extension can already be seen. The exit-entrance ramps at Elm Place are between 111th and 121st, and explosive retail and commercial growth has started. Arkansas Valley State Bank is building a branch office on the northeast corner of 121st and Elm. Wal-Mart has announced plans to build another Supercenter just north of 121st on the west side of Elm, and another major retailer is expected to announce plans soon for that same area.

Accessibility to the Loop at Kenosha has helped pave the way for start of construction on a Lowe's just north of that street and west of County Line Road.



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## ONG Franchise Election Set

Broken Arrow residents will have the opportunity to go to the polls Oct. 9 to vote on a franchise agreement between the City and Oklahoma Natural Gas Company.

Such agreements with utility companies are commonly voted on for an extended length of time to make it easier for them to enter public rights-of-way to install lines and do repair work, as well as to distribute and sell gas to the public. The ordinance which will be voted on also

includes details providing for use and repair of the public ways; providing for regulation of service; establishing depth of pipelines; and establishing rights and duties in the movement and alteration of pipelines.



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## **Innovations Save Citizens Money**

The cost of government, just like the cost of living, continues to climb. And while there are some of those costs that City of Broken Arrow officials have little control over, the staff is constantly looking for ways to save money.

An example in recent months has been a program which puts all of the radio communication systems under the control of Mark Ketchum in Public Works. The City has an extensive radio communication systems, which extends far beyond the police and fire needs. All of the divisions of the City are linked by the radio system, and it's one of Ketchum's responsibilities to stay "tuned in" to the changes in technology which can make that system work better and more efficiently.

Another money saver this year has been getting some of the mowing done in smaller parks through contracts. It allows Parks & Recreation staff to spend more time (and less money) on the extensive updating projects in playground equipment and shelters for the parks.

When the City changed its schedule of pickups for curbside trash, it provided a day (Wednesday) each week when vehicles could be serviced -- and rested! That will create a substantial savings in maintenance and give trucks a longer life.



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## **Hotel, Motel Tax Income Climbs**

Thanks in part to another busy summer of youth sports tournaments, plus the annual crowds attracted by Rhema's Kenneth Hagin Camp Meetings, hotels and motels more than doubled their taxable sales in July of this year compared to the same month in 2000. The total of \$672,056.78 brought in \$26,613.47 in tax monies, compared to \$318,651.30 and \$12,682.35 in July of 2000.



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